

# SAGE ACCPAC VIRTUAL IT



*"Mission Critical" accounting solutions.*

Are you faced with the challenge of making sure your Sage Accpac accounting system is always operational? Do you worry about what you will do if something goes wrong - who can you call? Will they be able to fix it? What if it's a network infrastructure problem and not a problem with Sage Accpac directly - will they still help you? What if nothing goes wrong but instead there is a change in the industry like a new harmonized tax? What if the banking industry makes changes to the requirements for printing and processing cheques? Will there be someone who knows enough about your Sage Accpac system and how it is configured to help?

It's through feedback and discussions like these with our clients, that Allstar created a new way in which it delivers Sage Accpac IT support services.

First, let's review the "old way". You know, "call us when it's broke, sometimes called "break fix" or "fee for service". Typically you'd call a vendor, wait your turn to speak to someone, then possibly wait for that person to eventually come out and assess the problem, quote the cost for a resolution and schedule the repair or implementation. Meanwhile, your business may be un-operational. Pricey and costly all-in-one!

Of course, the "break fix" is a reactive versus proactive strategy to Sage Accpac IT support. The "break fix" support strategy is counterintuitive to the operation of your business - that is an IT firm profits from your failures. This begs the question - how are your best interests served here? That is, the "break fix" is a zero-sum game; you lose so that the IT firm profits. Of course, we haven't even talked about the invisible and insidious cost of the down time including lost productivity, etc.

Ok, so what is the new way in which Allstar Tech delivers IT services? Well, for starters we replace the reactive "break fix" with a proactive "shared services" approach that averts costly downtime through regular maintenance and predictive failure.

We call this service "Virtual IT". We believe this is a paradigm shift in the "care and feeding" of all IT services. Under a Virtual IT Agreement, Allstar Tech functions as an extension of your business. Our company essentially becomes the (outsourced) Sage Accpac IT Support department for your business - a complete soup-to-nuts solution. It is like having your very own Sage Accpac Specialist on staff available when you need them without the costs of maintaining their education and authorization to be available only when you need them.

## SERVICES AVAILABLE THROUGH VIRTUAL IT

### Annual Version Upgrades

- Access to Allstar's lab facilities to perform an off site test upgrade
- Issues identified with the upgrade can be resolved without any down time to client
- Access to personnel outside regular business hours to perform upgrade

### Quarterly service pack review and updating

### Annual System Assessment

- Review of system
- Meeting with management to identify where improvements can be made
- Project planning services to implement enhancement/improvement

### Training

- New version changes
- Cross Training
- New Personnel

### Report Writing

- Maintenance of existing in place reports
- Creation of new reports
- Financial statement design

### Ad Hoc Technical support

# NETWORK VIRTUAL IT



*Our goal is to make it easy for your company to connect to your community, your clients and the world.*

Information Technology (IT) is far more 'mission critical' to your business operations than ever before. The advent of the Internet has escalated the demand for real-time information and services, increasing the pressure on businesses to focus on customer service provision more intensely than ever before.

Research has indicated that today's business operation necessities include high-speed Internet access, availability of email services, and access to network storage. An increasing number of organizations are also networking virtual offices through remote connections.

## INTERNAL IT - A SIGNIFICANT COMMITMENT

IT is important to the growth and stability of your business, although most medium sized companies will have issues justifying the cost of employing IT personnel. Cost is only one factor, however. Actually finding the people required to fill these roles is a daunting task.

Another facet of maintaining an IT department is the logistics involved in keeping IT personnel skills and industry knowledge up-to-date. Constant changes in the technology industry and the IT requirements for an individual business require a substantial financial commitment to continued staff education.

Another consideration is the need to manage the IT staff, an obligation which requires substantial time as well as the knowledge of this area.

## EXTERNAL IT (OR 'BREAK & FIX')

Lacking the time commitment, capital and space needed to create a dedicated IT department, many companies turn to external IT service providers. The established methodology of external IT support services follows the "call us when it's broke" (sometimes called 'break & fix') system, with a fee per service applied, making it difficult to budget for potential issues.

Additionally, in order to arrange for the external support services when problems arise, a client would have to place a series of calls first to vendors, then agents, then a tech support team before someone would schedule an on-site visit to assess the problem, quote the cost to fix the problem, and schedule a repair. Under the 'break & fix' system, the technician who arrives to do the work won't necessarily have ever worked on the system before, and won't know about the distinctive aspects of your IT system - it will be treated like all other systems, with a cookie-cutter repair strategy.

## SERVICES AVAILABLE THROUGH VIRTUAL IT

- Server Maintenance
- Desktop Support
- Application Support
- Security Reviews
- Virus & Spam Maintenance
- Tape Backup Verification
- Website Services
  - Hosting
  - Development
  - Maintenance

### Annual System Assessment

- Review of system
- Meeting with management to identify where improvements can be made
- Project planning services to implement enhancement/improvement

### Training

- Cross Training
- New Personnel

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During this period, the company's entire IT system could be down, consuming a sizeable number of employee hours, negatively impacting customer service levels and sales, decreasing productivity, and essentially interrupting the day-to-day operation of business - a costly process in more ways than one.

The 'break & fix' approach is a reactive rather than a proactive IT support strategy, and one that has caused many business owners to consider creating an internal IT department, despite the cost and effort already outlined above, in order to get more proactive support and eliminate IT downtime.

'Break & fix' as a solution is counterintuitive to the operation of any company, because the service provider which is being relied on to resolve the issues is actually profiting from the downtime. Since the 'break & fix' support company is paid on a per-issue basis, there is no incentive for the technical personnel to look for or anticipate associated issues (no matter how small) that may become larger issues in days or weeks to come, even if they are evident when providing service in one area. It is more profitable for the 'break & fix' company to return a second time, when the associated problem arises.

## **THE NEW EXTERNAL IT -- VIRTUAL IT - A NEW, PROACTIVE APPROACH**

Through dialogue and response from current and potential customers, Allstar has developed a unique method of providing IT solution services to midsized companies. Allstar Tech, having recognized the shortfalls inherent in the 'break & fix' system, has replaced it with a proactive shared services approach called Virtual IT, which diminishes costly downtime through a program of regular maintenance and foresight into potential malfunctions.

Under Virtual IT, clients pay an established monthly fee. There are no surprises on either side - clients know that their IT needs will be addressed promptly and satisfactorily without expensive surprises, and Allstar is able to dedicate the resources to serve that client. The fixed fee structure induces Allstar's skilled professionals to fix it right the first time, and to do preventative investigation to catch issues before they escalate into more major, difficult to solve problems. And because Allstar prides itself on developing close client relationships, the professionals who work on your system will know what sets it, and your company, apart from the others. Allstar's clients are more than just numbers - they're an integral part of our company.

Virtual IT represents a paradigm shift in the care and feeding of all IT services. Through the Virtual IT program Allstar functions as an extension of client businesses. Allstar essentially becomes an (outsourced) IT department - a comprehensive solution that includes services such as help desk assistance, desktop support, network administration, engineering services, network security, training, web design, procurement and asset management.

Virtual IT is like having an IT department with over 50 years' combined IT expertise at your fingertips - without the expensive infrastructure. Virtual IT is a low-cost, low-upkeep alternative to the substantial issues involved in hiring, training and retaining IT personnel, and one that could help your company achieve its goals of customer satisfaction and success.